

Park Profiles

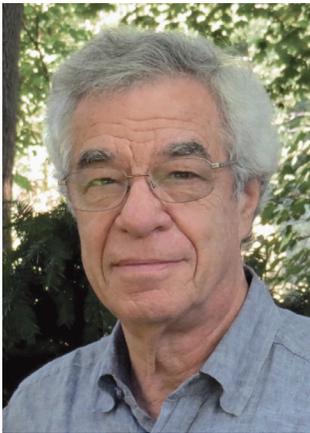
FALL 2016



Class of '01



Class of '78



Class of '58



Faculty



Class of '16



Class of '79



Classes of '75 & '47



The Park School
Active learning for life

We are pleased to present you with this latest edition of **Park Profiles!**

As you will read in the following stories, The Park School is a life-changing place. While each person's Park experience is unique, you'll find a common theme in these profiles – that Park provided the place and encouragement for students to find their own passions and the confidence to act upon them.

The alumni profiled here are making a difference in the world around them through their professional and volunteer activities, whether that's in California, Seattle, Illinois, or here in Western New York.

All of them have also stayed connected to the School through their visits, gifts, and/or active involvement in Park programs.

We hope you enjoy learning more about just a few of our many interesting alumni and that you will join them in supporting The Park School.



Park Profiles

FALL 2016

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The Park School

Active learning for life

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THEPARKSCHOOL.ORG

Much of what John Hoyt has achieved in his adult life has been the result of his willingness to take risks and push beyond his comfort zone.

FROM PARK TO POLITICS TO THE BIG CITY

When Hoyt was at The Park School in his sophomore year, he had a lead role in the school musical, “Bye-Bye Birdie.”

“It was the first time I did any sort of musical, and it was the result of finally saying, ‘It’s time to stop playing hockey and try other things.’ I only did it because of the support of a teacher, Peter Williamson, who encouraged me to let go of my fear and take on something like that.”

In addition to his time on stage and in the classroom, Hoyt spent hours at Park on the soccer, lacrosse, and football fields, as well as the hockey rink. He was recruited to play soccer at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in Russian and Eastern European studies.

“I really wanted to use my time at UNC to do something like ‘Bye-Bye Birdie,’ that was completely foreign to me,” he recalls. “Russian and Eastern European studies were something I thought would push my boundaries and my comfort level.”

After college, Hoyt decided he wanted to “get away from what I knew, and I drove to Alaska with a friend. For five months we built log cabins, went whitewater rafting. Then, not sure what to do next, I went back to what I knew, which was politics. I ended up getting a job with Walter Mondale, setting up events on the road with him during the 1984 presidential campaign. Then I ended up in New York City, where I had a number of different communications jobs.”

STRIKING OUT ON HIS OWN

In the spring of 1986, Hoyt worked managing operations for Hands Across America, a national fundraising event. Shortly after, he decided it was

time for a change. A voice told him to go West, young man, and he chose Seattle as his next destination. After a few years of working in politics and public relations there, Hoyt decided to open his own firm.

“I asked myself whether I could create something that just focuses on the non-profit world, social services, and the environment, and not just turning to top-dollar corporate work. I always felt that underserved communities weren’t being represented on public policy issues or in communications forums, so I started Pyramid Communications back in ’92.”

A CAUSE-RELATED MARKETER

Pyramid’s first client was an up-and-coming Seattle band named Pearl Jam. “I produced their first free concert and did all their politics, and they had from Day One a social-activist, give-back-to-the-community streak that I was attracted to. At the same time, in ’92, I did debate negotiations for the Clinton for President campaign with two other people, and that was kind of the launch of Pyramid. And 24 years later, they still haven’t shut us down.”

Pyramid’s website summarizes its mission: “Whether the issue is public policy decisions related to Alaska subsistence, childhood obesity, salmon recovery, or contract negotiation for labor clients, John thrives on crafting solutions to what sometimes appear to be unsolvable issues. His current and recent clients include the Washington State Opportunity Scholarship; KEXP; the Yakama Nation; the Seattle Art Museum; Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation; the Sealaska Corporation; and Seattle Public Schools.”

“I feel lucky to do the work I do every day,” he says.

OUTDOORSMAN AND ATHLETE

Hoyt is an avid squash player, tennis enthusiast, and runner. He frequently cycles to work and generally enjoys being outdoors, a trait that may run in his family. Hoyt’s father was William B. Hoyt ’56, the former Park School student and teacher who became a New York State Assemblyman from Buffalo.

The senior Hoyt was an avid canoeist who was said to have paddled more than 2,000 miles. William Hoyt was also an advocate for environmental causes in Albany. Protecting the environment has also been a big part of projects John Hoyt has worked on. And he sees a possible link to his school days.

“I would say that my time spent at Park really led me to understand the power of nature and the need to protect what we have,” he says. “The Park School campus is really a jewel in that you have access to nature for exploration that you don’t have at any other campus in the city.”

LOOKING BACK ON THE SCHOOL

Hoyt recalls with special fondness his second grade teacher, Winnie Evers. He says her “curiosity about life” has stayed with him. And an English teacher he had at Park, Sue DeWitt, “had a passion for words and storytelling” that resonates with Hoyt in his career.

In addition to Hoyt’s dad, John’s brother Sam ’80, graduated from Park, as did his sister, Carolyn Hoyt Stevens ’81, who is Park’s Director of Development. And other Hoyts from previous generations were Parkies, too.

“For the Hoyt family, I think we’ve had more relatives go to Park since it opened than anyone else,” John says. “Some people have their summer houses that they go to; the Hoyt family has The Park School. It really is a community that is still with me, that gives me the confidence to go out in the world and build my own community.”

INCLUDING PARK IN HIS PLANNING

Reflecting on the organizations that have made a difference in his life, Hoyt concluded by saying, “I recently decided to include Park in my legacy planning. I hope it’s a good long time before they get it, but feel good knowing that I’ll be helping the School well into its future.”

>> YEARS AT PARK: 1963 – 1978

>> ACTIVITIES AT PARK:
Theater, soccer, hockey, lacrosse, senior class president

>> EDUCATION:
BA, Russian & Eastern European Studies
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

>> CAREER:
President and Founder, Pyramid Communications –
35 person public affairs strategic communication
firm with offices in Seattle and Portland –
www.pyramidcommunications.com

>> AWARDS/HONORS/PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OF NOTE:
Board member of Ploughshares Fund and Capitol
Hill Housing Foundation. Volunteer for numerous
political campaigns.



>> HOBBIES:
Squash, tennis, running, gardening, and canoeing.



>> YEARS AT PARK: 1996 – 2001

>> ACTIVITIES AT PARK:
Model UN, Theater, *Spark*

>> EDUCATION:
Brown University (BS),
University of Wisconsin – Madison
(PhD, MS)

>> CAREER:
Assistant Professor of Oncology,
Roswell Park Cancer Institute

>> HOBBIES:
Boxing

FROM PARK TO ROSWELL PARK

Kevin Eng is an Assistant Professor of Oncology at Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo, which he describes as a multifaceted job. “I am a scientist trained in mathematics, statistics, genetics, and oncology – so I am trained to think about systems, patterns, uncertainty, and cancer,” he said.

“My lab at Roswell and our collaborators study how to use the genome to treat ovarian cancer. Our goal is to reverse-engineer weaknesses to exploit ways to monitor tumor progression, or ways to detect cancer early. It requires a trained scientist who can converse with multiple fields, who has a little creativity, and a lot of ability to absorb failure.”

Eng is also a member of Park School’s Board of Visitors and is quite enthusiastic about the school’s plans to build a new science center. He is very thoughtful when it comes to expressing what his Park education has meant to him.

BACK TO PARK’S ROOTS

When he was in 10th grade, Eng took a seminar about education theory with Kerry Maguire, a Park School English teacher at the time.

“It was very illuminating for me and I started reading more about Park’s original philosophy,” he said. “I started experimenting with the key ideas from Mary Hammett Lewis’ notes. For one thing, I never ate lunch indoors again.” Eng turned Miss Lewis’ ideas about Progressive Education into action.

“I somehow convinced my advisers to grant me a ridiculous number of independent studies at Park,” said Eng. “I started an advanced science seminar, organized an Immersion for writing plays – the results of that were very bad – and to try to create the space for other students to pursue their own projects by reworking the Upper School student government.

“I think all the independent studies came from having the interests that we couldn’t fit into the normal curriculum,” he said. “A lot of them have become classes that are offered at Park or would be possible today.”

FROM BUFFALO TO BROWN

After graduation in 2001, Eng attended Brown University. “For me, Brown was like four more years at Park – their ‘New Curriculum’ encouraged us to take the classes we wanted without prerequisites, any class could be taken pass/fail,” he said. “I think only a Park student could have talked their way into a graduate geophysics field practicum. This was a great class because I learned that professional science is a debate among peers and you need to learn to persuade and argue.”

“My diploma from Brown is in Latin and translates as ‘the study of random things.’ This can be taken two ways,” Eng says. “It could either be the study of random variation or it could be just the study of a bunch of random things.”

In the summer after his sophomore year at Brown, Eng “talked his way into” a research position at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. He would later get his Master’s degree and a Ph.D. there, both in statistics.

DISCOVERING CANCER RESEARCH

Working on research at Wisconsin was when Eng became invested in the idea that he could contribute to improving cancer treatment. He says cancer research appeals to him both intellectually and emotionally.

“A reason I ended up picking ovarian cancer to work on is because when you read the statistics you appreciate the clinical magnitude of the disease,” he said. “You get a sense of what the individual families are going through. A key theme from my years at Park is that all students – not just scientists – have to have some important work to think about all the time.”

After Wisconsin, Eng worked at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City before returning to Western New York to take a position at Roswell Park. One of the benefits of being home is it gives him a chance to make frequent visits to Park, from which his brothers Ed ’07 and Lukas ’11 also graduated.

A SCIENTIST’S PERSPECTIVE

“I returned to Buffalo at a very opportune time for medical science and for The Park School,” he said. “I was fortunate to be invited to participate on the Board of Visitors and I was very excited to learn about the Science@Park capital campaign.”

“While serving on the Board of Visitors this year, I learned that there is a tremendous opportunity to re-engineer the pond into a state-of-the-art ecosystem that doubles as a research-level outdoor laboratory. In addition to a beautiful pond area, imagine having a space to experiment with water turbines for energy or testing which plant species are best for cleaning runoff pollution from the Circle.

“Wetland ecology projects could easily find synergy with the new science building. Speaking from the academic side, I think we have a resource that university projects need and partnering with them can certainly help us see ahead and deliver university-level instruction to our students now.”

Eng becomes animated as he talks about the new science building.

EXCITEMENT FOR SCIENCE@PARK

“Imagine if you could start in middle school getting some basic science fieldwork: how to set up a grid, how to make basic observations, how to keep logs and notes, and then as you move into high school you start to work on concrete projects such as monitoring the quality of the water.”

Eng said some people tell him his visions are too optimistic, that he’s expecting too much of students.

“I see that other schools are beefing up their AP classes or building fancy training labs that train technicians, not scientists,” he says. “As a Park School graduate, I know there is a significant amount of real science to do on campus and this can only lead to confident and able science students at The Park School.”

>> YEARS AT PARK: 1975 – 1979

>> ACTIVITIES AT PARK:

Theater, *Spark* Editor-in-Chief, Cheerleader, Sports (Athlete of the Year award 1979)

>> EDUCATION:

New York University, 1983, BA Political Science/Journalism

California Western School of Law, 1988, JD

>> CAREER:

1983 – 1985: Freelance Journalist

1988 – 1993: Private Practice Criminal Defense Attorney

1993 – 2000: Attorney with McKenna & Cuneo (now McKenna, Long & Aldridge)

2000 – Present: Lead Trial Counsel and President, Damiani Law Group APC

>> PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES:

Master in the American Inn of Court, William B. Enright Chapter (formerly on the Board); Past Chair of the Criminal Law Section of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America and a member of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NACDL) and the National Employment Lawyers Association (NELA); Lecturer (various topics for the California State Bar, the National Institute of Trial Advocacy (NITA), the National Association of Professional Employer Organizations (NAPEO), Continuing Education of the Bar (CEB) and Federal Defender's Inc.); Facilitator for the ABA sponsored program "Core Skills of Creative Problem Solving."

>> AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS:

AV Preeminent Rating, Bar Register of Preeminent Women Lawyers (2011 – present); Attorney of the Month (San Diego Attorney Journal, September 2012); Top Lawyer – Criminal Defense, Employment, and Business Law (San Diego Magazine, March 2013, March 2014)

>> HOBBIES:

Watching my son play football, writing, photography, skiing, bicycle riding, running

LISA DAMIANI *Class of 1979*



Lisa Damiani's father always wanted her to be a lawyer and she is that – and more – as a successful defense attorney who has been designated one of San Diego's "Super Lawyers" by a national rating service. But that was not part of the plan when she graduated from The Park School in 1979 and headed off to New York University.

STARTING OUT AS A JOURNALIST

"When I got to NYU, I started writing and I decided that I wanted to be a journalist. I remember telling my father, Gene, that I wasn't going to go to law school, and it just about broke his heart."

After graduating, Damiani tried to make it as a journalist. But there was a gap between what she earned as a freelance writer and the high cost of rent in the city. "It was a tough time," she says.

Her dad had told her that if she ever wanted to attend law school, he'd provide financial help. "So I called him and said, 'You know what? I want to go to law school.' It was the happiest day of his life."

MAKING THE SWITCH TO LAW

Damiani enrolled in California Western School of Law in San Diego. "My criminal law teacher, Larry Benner, said to me, 'Lisa, you really should get into criminal defense work. It would be perfect for you.'"

Just for fun, she says, she applied for a job working with one of San Diego's top criminal defense attorneys, Juanita Brooks.

"I ended up getting a job with her, and some other criminal lawyers, and I really enjoyed it. When I passed the bar exam, they would send me for court appearances. So I was fresh out of school, and was dealing with cases in a courtroom. I just got addicted to that and decided that I couldn't do anything else."

GOING OUT ON HER OWN

In 1993, a national law firm recruited Damiani to join its white-collar crime practice group. She worked there for seven years before starting her own firm, the Damiani Law Group APC, which handles a variety of cases, including criminal and employment labor issues, and business litigation.

"Felony cases, anything from embezzlement, grand theft, financial crimes, violent crimes, allegations of domestic violence, sex offenses...the only thing I would not handle would be death penalty work, because it would consume my practice."

BOWLING FOR DOLLARS

Her entrepreneurial spirit was probably imprinted in her genes. When Damiani was in middle school her family moved from Long Island to Buffalo. Her father gave up a career as an aerospace engineer with Grumman to become a partner in a new bowling alley, Lancaster Lanes on Transit Road. "It ended up being successful for him and he was able to send us to Park," says Damiani, whose brother, John, was a year ahead of her at the School.

MEMORIES OF PARK

Damiani remembers her graduating class at Park as being fairly small, about 25 students. "I had an opportunity to do whatever I wanted. I was a cheerleader, I was in plays, I was involved in sports, and senior year I was editor-in-chief of the yearbook."

Damiani's science teacher, Father Edward Lawler, was particularly memorable.

"Even though I'm not in any way involved in science, the man was just such a wonderful person. He was so loving, and open, and you just felt safe with him. Any kind of issue you would have, he would be there, willing to help or talk." Damiani says her drama teacher, Mrs. Banas, was also influential. "Dr. Klein, Dr. Hailpern, Mr. Schnorr ... all of them. I remember them just being so wonderful."

NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Damiani's name has been in the national media as the legal representative for the family of James Holmes, who has been charged with the movie theater killings in Aurora, Colo., which left 12 people dead and 58 wounded. She represents only the suspect's family, not Holmes himself.

"Initially, my representation of them was related to inquiries made by the criminal investigators, responding to requests for interviews by the media, and helping guide them through the process of what is happening to their son," Damiani said.

Damiani's career success includes being recognized by Super Lawyers, a national rating service based in Minnesota. She says the "super" designation is made based on peer reviews from other lawyers and judges in her community. "It's really an honor to know that your fellow colleagues think highly of you," she said.

When she's not in the courtroom, Damiani enjoys spending time with her 12-year-old son, Nikolay.

CONFIDENCE FROM PARK

"Park gave me the confidence to set goals, and achieve them, and not be afraid to pursue those goals," she said. "If I tried out for the lead in a play, I wouldn't have to feel fear that I'd be laughed at or ridiculed. I can't sing, but I was able to attain the lead role in 'Bye-Bye Birdie' and I sang! Looking back, I'm thinking, 'My goodness, was I confident! I'd never sing publicly again.'"

"Now I'm out of that safe environment, and in life you're thrown into some not-so-safe and unwelcoming environments, but you're able to carry that with you in your core, so that regardless of where you are or what the obstacles are, you can look inside yourself and know you can do this."

Guy Gunzberg earned a B.S. and an MBA from Harvard. But ask him about how his education influenced him and his thoughts go back to the school he attended for 14 years in Snyder, New York.

VALUING PARK OVER HARVARD

“College was interesting,” he says. “Business school was fine. But The Park School was the most profound and important educational experience of my life.”

Gunzberg had many fine teachers at Park, he says. One that stands out is Dr. Raoul Hailpern, the School’s legendary math teacher. Gunzberg was the first Park student to take instruction from him.

In the spring of Gunzberg’s junior year at Park, he went to New Zealand through the American Field Service exchange program. When he returned in December of his senior year, he had missed the first semester of trigonometry. How would he catch up?

TUTORED BY A PARK LEGEND

Gunzberg’s math teacher, Jacky Knopp, said he had a cousin who had just relocated from Egypt who might tutor Gunzberg over the winter recess. Knopp’s cousin was Dr. Raoul Hailpern.

“So Raoul and I worked at his dining room table, with his family around,” Gunzberg recalls. “Raoul sat down with me, no books, he did it all from his head. It was an extraordinary experience. In seven hours of tutoring, I made up the entire course.”

Gunzberg and Dr. Hailpern developed a close friendship. He inspired Gunzberg to “pay it forward” by becoming a tutor himself. Today he is in his 10th year of tutoring at a high school in Evanston, Illinois. “I’m doing it really because of the aura that occurred when I had my own tutoring.”

TO THE IVY LEAGUE

After graduation from Park, Gunzberg was off to Harvard to study physical sciences, which he says was a combination of math, physics, chemistry, astronomy, and geology. He also took his first computer course.

“There was only one computer course and I got hooked,” he recalls. “We worked on the old UNIVAC I. And it got me because that became my life’s work.”

After graduation in 1962, Gunzberg joined the Peace Corps, which had just been established under President John F. Kennedy. He traveled to Malawi, in south central Africa, and taught several different subjects to the students at a day school in a town called Blantyre.

Gunzberg considered making teaching a career, but the business world appealed to him, as well. After business school, he became the fourth generation of his family to work at M. Wile, which in 1969 became a subsidiary of Hart Schaffner & Marx – then the largest producer of men’s clothing in the world.

COMPUTERS AND CLOTHING

Gunzberg’s early adoption of computers helped him to drive innovation in the clothing business.

“The whole world today – everywhere that apparel is made – uses computers to lay out the patterns that automatic cutting machines follow to cut the cloth. That was my Master’s thesis and that’s what I brought to M. Wile. And that’s what I brought to the company that bought it – Hartmarx”

A TECHNOLOGY INNOVATOR

In 1983, at the request of Hartmarx, Gunzberg and his family relocated to the Chicago area. “I was asked to bring the rest of the corporation up to where we were in Buffalo,” he recalls.

By the mid 1980s, it became clear that the U.S. apparel industry was in trouble. He and others from Hartmarx worked on projects to try to save the industry through technological innovation. “We made progress, but not as fast as the industry was falling apart, unfortunately,” he recalls.

After years of transition, Hartmarx filed for bankruptcy in 2009 and its assets were sold.

LOOKING BACK AT PARK

Gunzberg has been retired since the early 2000s. In addition to his tutoring, he has become an accomplished woodworker, building furniture and other things.

As he looks back on his career as a driver of innovation in manufacturing, his thoughts drift back to the school where he developed his love of learning.

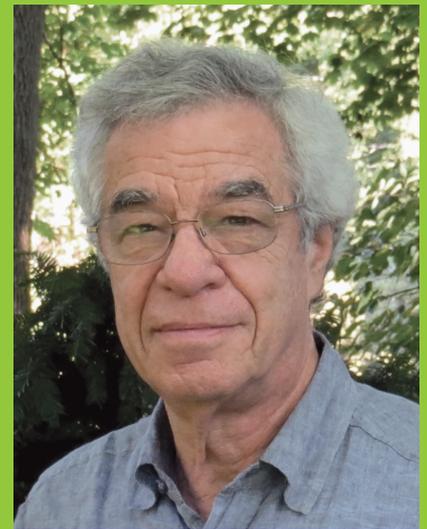
“At Park we were taught to think for ourselves,” he says. “And that’s not always what the world wants. I find that I think differently from a lot of the people who I’ve had to work with or come in contact with. Much more creatively. I ask the questions that most other people don’t even think about.”

STAYING TRUE TO HIS SCHOOL

Gunzberg’s commitment to Park will continue in perpetuity based on the planned gift he has made to support the School.

“When I think back to my commitment to the 1912 Legacy Society, I believe that I made the decision well before our 50th reunion. For me, there has never been a question about how much Park has meant to me. When my wife Joan and I last met with our estate planner, we agreed to add some charitable bequests to our plans, and Park was an obvious choice for me.”

Gunzberg added, “Perhaps it was the cumulative effect of prior reunions, communications from the school, and occasional get-togethers and emails among classmates. All these tended to focus the mind, so when the estate planning decision came along, it was a natural choice. For me, my 50th reunion and Park’s 100th anniversary merely reinforced the decision.”



>> YEARS AT PARK: 1944 – 1958

>> ACTIVITIES AT PARK:

Spark photographer, *Spark* Business Board; American Field Service (AFS); theatre; soccer, volleyball, track, tennis

>> EDUCATION:

Harvard, BA, 1962
Harvard, MBA, 1968

>> CAREER:

Teacher, Peace Corps – Math, Physics, Chemistry – Malawi, Africa

Vice President, Information Systems and Planning – M. Wile & Co. / Hartmarx Corp.

Vice President, Information Systems and Planning – Fel-Pro Inc.

Chief Information Officer – American Express Tax & Business Services

>> PROFESSIONAL AND

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES:

Textile/Clothing Technology Corporation [TC]2; Uniform Code Council; Patents – U.S., U.K., Canada – invented Point of Manufacture Data Acquisition Terminal; University of Illinois at Chicago – Dean’s Task Force on Information Technology; Rembrandt Chamber Players – Past President, Life Trustee; Evanston Township High School – Calculus Tutor

>> RECOGNITIONS:

AFS – first study abroad class, New Zealand – 1957; Hartmarx Corp – First Innovation Award; Evanston Township High School – Tutor of the Year

>> INTERESTS:

Furniture design and woodworking, tutoring, pro-bono consulting, travel, music

MARION "TADDY" DANN

>> YEARS AT PARK: 1936 – 1947

>> ACTIVITIES AT PARK:

Theater, *Spark*, art, music, lacrosse, field hockey, tennis, soccer

>> EDUCATION:

Briarcliff Junior College

>> CAREER:

Park School: Phys-Ed teacher and coach after college. Girls lacrosse coach 1970s - 80s.

>> VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES:

Park School Board of Trustees and Development Committee; Planned Parenthood; Albright Knox Art Gallery and Burchfield-Penney Art Center volunteer; Handicapped Skier Ski Instructor; National Audubon Volunteer and Nature Guide; Beaver Meadow Audubon Center board member; Knox Farm nature walk guide.

>> RECOGNITIONS:

Park School Sports Hall of Fame; Inducted into the WNY Lacrosse Hall of Fame

>> HOBBIES:

Family, tennis, sailing, outdoor enthusiast, camping, ornithology

MIKE DANN

>> YEARS AT PARK: 1962 – 1975

>> ACTIVITIES AT PARK:

Theater, *Spark*, track, soccer, hockey, lacrosse

>> EDUCATION:

1979, New England College, ECC (History and Environmental Science)

>> CAREER:

Farmhand in Rhode Island; lacrosse coach; Level III certified Ski Instructor (20 yrs); Boat builder in Rockport, ME; Independent building contractor; Account Executive and Project Manager at Hadley Exhibits Inc.

>> PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES:

Professional Ski Instructor Association of America, Park School Facilities Committee

>> HOBBIES:

Family, boating and restoration, outdoor enthusiast, woodworking, skiing

MIKE DANN | TADDY TAYLOR DANN

Class of 1975

Class of 1947



HOOFING IT TO SCHOOL

When Marion "Taddy" Dann was growing up, she often rode to school on horseback from her home in Williamsville. (The route to Park's campus was mostly farmland.) The practice ended thanks to a comment from a classmate.

"There was a barn at Park that was kind of neat," Dann recalls. "But in sixth grade, Bud Tanner told me I smelled like it, so then I stopped riding to school."

While it's been quite a while since a Park student has ridden a horse to school, Taddy Dann's bucolic commutings are part of a long association between the Dann family and The Park School. Taddy attended Park from kindergarten through ninth grade. After boarding school in Connecticut and two years at Briarcliff Junior College, she returned to Buffalo and Park when the Head of School, Adolphus Cheek, offered her \$5 a week to be a gym teacher and coach.

"We all totally admired Mr. Cheek," Dann said. "He lived in that wonderful little house, the headmaster's house," in which Park's third grade teacher, Chris Downey, now resides. "He was our leader."

BRINGING LACROSSE TO PARK

Taddy and husband, Bill Dann, began coaching girls and boys lacrosse at Park, a sport to which they had been introduced by friends who were Tuscarora Indians.

"Mom was instrumental in bringing women's lacrosse to Western New York," said Taddy and Bill's son Mike, who graduated from Park in 1975. Mike played on Park's lacrosse team and was coached by his father.

"The Tuscarora Reservation was in Lewiston," Taddy said. "They were key in encouraging us to get going on lacrosse." Mike said they met several Native Americans through the Buffalo Lacrosse Club.

"We really got a lacrosse education from the Native Americans and came to know the families fairly well," he said.

"When we went to the Reservation we were allowed to pick out our lacrosse sticks. There wasn't a Dick's Sporting Goods where you could go and buy your sticks in those days. We would go down there and

they would hand us the sticks, and as we got a little more involved with the guys we could go down there and say, 'Well, could you bend mine a certain way?' They were all handmade, wooden sticks, which they don't do anymore," Taddy added.

In recognition of Taddy Dann's pioneering role as a girls coach, she was inducted in 1996 to the Rochester chapter of the Lacrosse Hall of Fame.

"It's a super sport," Dann says. "Girls lacrosse is very skilled; there's not a lot of hitting and banging. Girls don't wham each other over the head the way boys do."

A PARKIE FOR LIFE

Mike Dann refers to himself as "a Park lifer." He attended from kindergarten right through high school. Afterward, he attended New England College, graduating in 1979.

A talent for arts and crafts seems to run in the Dann family, along with a love of the outdoors. Mike is no exception. After college he became a ski instructor, working at Kissing Bridge, southeast of Buffalo, and at Sugarbush in Vermont.

He spent some summers working on a farm in Rhode Island, others working as an apprentice in a shop where wooden boats were built in Rockport, Maine.

"Building boats is kind of our passion," Mike said. "My dad got us into appreciating wooden boats and maintaining them."

Dann has worked for the past 25 years at Hadley Exhibits in Buffalo, where he is an account executive and project manager. The company designs, fabricates and installs exhibits for museums, corporations, and other clients.

"We've done work for the Smithsonian, the National Park Service ... and we just finished up the 9/11 Memorial in New York City," Mike said. "We've done museums in just about every state. Working in a museum gives you an education in history."

BENEFITS OF A PARK EDUCATION

Mike Dann said Park allowed him to develop communications skills that have served him well in his adult life.

"You were allowed to say what was on your mind at Park," he said. "And I think through that, and through inheriting my mother's skill for talking to complete strangers, that's helped me a lot at Hadley. Whether it's meeting new contractors, architects, designers, and being able to feel comfortable talking to them, it's been a great help."

Taddy Dann has served on Park's Board of Trustees, as well as volunteering in many other capacities over the years.

"Park made me a happy, happy person," Taddy said. "Every committee I've been on – I just loved the School. It's a great experience for anyone who is involved. Park is special. And it's wonderful to see what a beautiful place it is today – the pond, the woods, the new buildings and more."

NIGEL JACOBS *Class of 2016*

Anyone who thinks of today's high school students as unmotivated or apathetic has not met Nigel Jacobs. The recent graduate was president of his junior class, played violin in The Park School Orchestra, sang in the chorus, competed on the bowling team, rowed crew for West Side Rowing Club, and performed in several Park Players productions. He has served on the School's Judicial Board and acted in Park musicals.

And that list barely scratches the surface. Nigel was a member of the Board of Trustees of the National Federation of Just Communities of Western New York. He served in the Community Builders Program and Jack and Jill of America's Buffalo Chapter, Teen Executives. He also participated in Jack and Jill's Beautillion Program, a six-month leadership development curriculum.

SCHOLARSHIP WINNER AND LEADER

Nigel's potential as a student and community leader was evident when he first entered Park as a 9th grader. The Education Collaborative (EdCo) each year awards full-tuition scholarships to "talented, dedicated students of color who want to attend one of 15 participating EdCo high schools," according to The John R. Oishei Foundation, which funds the scholarships. He won the Oishei Scholarship his freshman year and has not looked back.

"Park is smaller than most schools, and I really liked having small classes," Nigel said. "It's a friendly community, and because it's smaller people know each other."

INSPIRED BY PARK TEACHERS AND ADVISERS

Nigel mentioned Park teachers and staff members who have been particularly meaningful to him.

"My adviser, Mrs. (Marnie) Cerrato, helped me out a lot and encouraged me to do things I might not try. Mr. (Matt) Johnson, my history teacher, was very kind to me when I came here. I have a huge interest in history, so we have that connection.

"My English class with Mrs. (Kerry) Reynolds was another one, because she made us do journals and reflect on ourselves. It helped me to really figure out what I think about things."

AN INDIVIDUAL WHO IS ACTIVE IN THE COMMUNITY

Nigel's involvement in community activities plays a large role in his life.

"Through NFJC, I participated in the Community Builders Program where I had the benefit of volunteering in such efforts as anti-bullying conferences, program and law enforcement retreats, and The Dash for Diversity."

He said the Jack and Jill Beautillion includes "a Rites of Passage program, a cultural component that seeks to connect us with our African heritage."

In two recent summers, Nigel worked as a teaching assistant for Buffalo Prep's summer program for middle school, was a lifeguard for the Neumann Catholic swim league, and served as assistant counselor for Park's Summer Scholars program.

SEEING THE WORLD AND MEETING ITS CITIZENS

"I have also traveled the world," he adds. In the summer of 2012, Nigel visited Paris, Geneva, Vienna, Rome, Florence, Venice, and other cities on a People to People Ambassador program.

Through Park's Immersion program, he has been to Cuzco, Peru, and to northern China.

Nigel had a particularly memorable academic experience in the summer of 2014, when he attended Yale University's Young Global Scholars Program on Politics, Law, and Economics.

"It was an amazing program," he said. "I got to meet people from around the world, people from other states, and from other countries who talked about their cultures. That was a really memorable experience."

"I studied politics, law, and economics in the United States ... delving deeper into those things, learning how our country was founded. I got to understand history a little bit better and what was going on then by learning how people were thinking during that time period."

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE AND LEARNING FROM THE PAST

The tug of history is strong for Nigel. He is particularly drawn to the story of the United States from the American Revolution through the Civil War.

"There were a lot of problems and it was hard to unite the country," he said about the Civil War. "And the American Revolution ... people said, 'We are the United States of America, we are all together,' but that's not actually how it happened. It took a long time to get everybody together."

Nigel is a freshman at Morehouse College in Atlanta where he is thinking of majoring in history, media studies, international relations, or computer science.

"I am not sure what I want to do as a future career," he said. "But I do know that whatever I do, I want to make an impact on how we live together as world citizens."



>> YEARS AT PARK: 2012 – 2016

>> ACTIVITIES AT PARK:
Judicial Board, Theater, Orchestra, Chorus, Junior Class President, NFJC Board member, Jack and Jill of America's Buffalo Chapter, Teen Executives and Beautillion program

>> COLLEGE:
Morehouse College '20



When Jodee Johnson was growing up her family moved from Africa to Australia to New York City. After college she went backpacking through Central Europe. Johnson's ability to navigate various cultures prepared her well for her current role at Park, where she teaches classes in English as a Second Language (ESL) and Music, and is Assistant Coordinator for the School's International Program.

THE MAKING OF AN ESL TEACHER

Johnson was born in the former Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe.

"My father's family is very British Colonial," she said. "My grandmother has a fantastically British accent and drinks tea at all the right times of day. My mother is Australian, and my dad foresaw political unrest there before it happened in the '70s. We left and moved to Australia when I was just a couple of years old.

"I was there until I was a teenager and grew up in a town of 3,500 people. My dad farmed cotton most of that time, so 5,000 or 6,000 acres was my backyard. Through a series of events, we ended up in New York City." Johnson was 14 when she arrived in New York. She finished high school "at a very small church school," and then went to Concordia College in Bronxville, N.Y.

AN OUTSIDER'S INSIGHT

She says her experiences as an outsider coming to New York help her relate to the foreign students at Park.

"I never had a language barrier, per se; I spoke English, but people congratulated me on how well I spoke the language," not realizing that Australians also spoke English, she recalled. "We came in the mid-'80s, so it was pre-Crocodile Dundee," she said, referring to the 1986 film that raised the profile of Australia among Americans.

>> YEARS AT PARK: 2012 to present

>> CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

Lived on five continents and taught English on three; London School of Modern Languages, Czech Republic; Shanghai (China) Community International School, K-6 music and ESL

>> EDUCATION:

1992 BS, Music Education
Concordia College, Bronxville, NY

2002 Master's in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, City University of New York

>> HOBBIES AND INTERESTS:

Traveling to new places and returning to favorites with my sons Caleb and Gage, and husband Matt Johnson; exploring Buffalo and other corners of WNY; reading, and currently, learning the ukulele

"Coming from a small, rural town to New York City, there were plenty of cultural differences, so I think that helps me in some ways have a little bit of an understanding of some of our students making the choice to come to the United States because it's educationally advantageous."

Johnson graduated from college with a degree in music education at a time when budget constraints were forcing school districts to curtail or eliminate arts instruction. With jobs somewhat scarce, she took off on a backpacking trip through Central Europe.

MOVING TO EASTERN EUROPE

"I fell in love with the city of Prague," she recalls. "While I was there, I found a girl who had just moved there, and she had taken this intensive training course to teach ESL, so she was beginning her job that week. It was one of those moments when you're like, 'That's what I want to do.'"

Johnson returned to New York and earned her certification to teach English as a second language. "I went back to the Czech Republic and found myself a job with a language school, and that's how I got into language teaching. It was the mid- to late-'90s, so there were plenty of Westerners around, yet it was still a fantastic contrast to everything I'd ever experienced in terms of a city and a culture."

She spent a little over 18 months in the Czech Republic, making side trips to Bosnia-Herzegovina, Poland, and Slovenia ("probably the most beautiful country in the world").

Johnson returned home to New York and enrolled at City University of New York, earning a master's degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.

HELPING PARK'S FOREIGN STUDENTS

Part of Johnson's mission at Park is to support the students from overseas in their educational journey.

She said that sometimes her heart "aches" for the students who arrive for ninth grade. "The amount of independence they have in such a short time..."

Johnson has been impressed with the progress made by many of the students who come to Park from other countries and cultures. She said three members of the 2014 graduating class – Jeremy Jiang, Sam Sun, and Eve Xia – started a club to help share the cultures of China and other countries with their American counterparts.

"Those students really took an amazing amount of initiative" in making the club a success, she said. "They felt like they had something to share with our American students and they really ran with it."

Johnson is married to Matt Johnson, a history teacher at Park. Before coming to the School, both taught at international schools in Shanghai, China.

"It was a fantastic experience of traveling and working with diverse student bodies. Our students came from all over the world."

APPRECIATING PARK'S COMMUNITY

Having taught students in such varied settings, Johnson said she has a real appreciation for the family atmosphere that she sees at Park.

"From prekindergarten through grade 12, I love that Park is a real community, and that we develop ways for the students to overlap, so that older students have the experience of being models for younger students.

"Matt had a group where upper schoolers were taking the lower school students down on the ropes course, and what a learning process that was for the high schoolers, learning to talk to elementary school students, and then for the elementary school students to have the big basketball-playing boys lead them through the course was pretty cool for them."

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1912
LEGACY
SOCIETY

We are pleased that several of the alumni profiled in this issue are supporting the future of the School with a legacy or planned gift in recognition of the positive impact that Park played in their lives. The mark shown on the left identifies them as members of the School's 1912 Legacy Society. In this way, they are helping to ensure that the life-changing experiences they had at Park will be available for current and future students at the School.

We were freshly reminded about how important a planned gift can be with the recent passing of Harold Tweeden '47. Harold was a loyal alumnus and honorary member of the Board of The Park School Foundation that oversees Park's endowment funds. In 1997, he established the Tweeden-Dow Scholarship Fund in memory of his mother, Minnie, and members of the Dow family, including his friend and classmate, James Dow. The Tweeden-Dow Fund has supported many students since its inception and because of Harold's foresight and incredible generosity, will do so in perpetuity providing even larger scholarship awards to talented students whose families could not otherwise afford a Park School education.

To join the 102 alumni and friends of The Park School who are making legacy gifts, please contact **Carolyn Hoyt Stevens, Director of Development**, at 716-839-1243 x104. Your planned future gift helps strengthen Park today!



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Upcoming Events

- DECEMBER 22: 5 p.m. – Co-ed Alumni Basketball Game
- DECEMBER 23: Alumni Holiday Party –
Big Ditch Brewing Company
- JANUARY 4: College Alumni Panel
- JANUARY 22: 1 - 3 p.m. – Open House
- MARCH 4: 5:30 p.m. – Auction 2017: *School of Good Neighbors*
- MARCH 22: Countdown to Commencement Dinner for the Class of 2017
- JUNE 17-18: Commencement, Reunion 2017, Sports Hall of Fame Induction

For more information, please contact:
Tai Nixa, Event Coordinator, at 716-839-1243 x103 or tnixa@theparkschool.org

